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OLE RABBIT AN' DE DAWG HE STOLE.

In de good ole times, Ole Rabbit he wuzzen' scrouge none by de nabuz. Hit wuz miles ter de cornder ob enny un ob ums fiel'.

Atter wiles, Mistah Injun an' he folkses sot um up er sottlemint, but dat ain' nuttin, kase dem Injun folks wuz alluz a-perawdin' eroun' an' a-ketchin up dey plundah,[1] an' a-movin' it hyeah an' yondah.

Bimeby, dough, de wite men come 'long a-choppin' down de trees an' a-diggin' up de yeath. Den all de crittuz pack dey go-ter-meetin' close in er piller-case an' git ready ter staht, kase dey know dat Mistah Wite Man come foh ter stay, an' he ain' one o' de kine dat wanter sleep free[2] in de bed an' dey ain' ne'er. Dat is all on um cep Ole Chuffy Rabbit an' de Squirl fambly sot out. Dey two 'low dey gwine ter tough hit out while longah.

Wat pester Ole Chuffy mo' den all de res' wuz dat wite man's dawg. Hit wuzzen' lak dem Injun dawgs, dat's a-scatterin' roun' de kyentry ter day an' in de pot ter morrer. Hit wuz one o' dem shahp-nose houn'-dawgs dat hunt all day an' howl all night. Hit wuz es still ez er fox on er tucky-hunt fum de mawnin twell cannel-light, but des wait twell de sun go down an' de moon come up an' — oh Lawd! Ah, oo-oo-oo-wow, ow, ow! Ah oo-oo-oo, wow, ow, ow! Ah oo-oo-oo, wow, ow, ow! heah hit go fum mos' sun-down ter mos' sun-up, an' dat wuz de mos' aggervaxines' soun' dat de Ole Boy e'er putt in de thote ob er libin crittur. Hit des' stractid Ole Rabbit. He flounce roun' in de bed lak er cat-fish on de hook. He groan an' he grunt, an' he tuhn an' he roll, an' he des kyarn' git no good res'. He bin un o' de smoove torkin' kine gin'ly, but dat houn' mek 'im cuss twell ole Miss Rabbit she bleege ter roll de bed-kivuz roun' huh yeahs, she dat scannelize.

"Wy doan' yo' git outen de baid an' tuhn yo' shoe wid de bottom-side up an' set yo' bar foot onter hit?" she say. "Dat mek enny dawg stop he yowlin'."

"Well! ain' I done hit forty-leben time?" say Ole Man Rabbit des a-fumin' an' a-snortin'. "Ain' I bin a-hoppin' in an' out de baid all de lib-long night? Cose hit stop um foh er half er jiff an' den hit chune up ergin 'foh I des kin git de baid wahm unner me."

Ah oo-oo-oo, wow, ow, ow! Ah oo-oo-oo, *wow*, ow, OW! Dat ole houn' fetch er yowl dat far mek de man in de moon blink.

"Cuss dat ole dawg! Cuss um say I! Wy doan' dat ole fool dat own um stuff er cawn-cob down he frote, ur chop um inter sassige-meat?" sez Ole Rabbit, sez 'e. "I gin up on de sleepin' queschun ter night," sez 'e, "but I lay I ain' 'sturb lak dis in my res' termorrer," sez 'e.

[1] Plunder, *i. e.* baggage.

[2] Three.

Wid dat he bounce out on de flo' an' haul on he britches an' light er toller-dip; an' he tek dat toller-dip in he han' an' he go pokin' roun' mungs de shadders lak he a-huntin' foh sumpin'.

Scratch, scratch! scuffle, scuffle! he go in de cornderz ob de cubbered.

Ah oo-oo-oo! wow, ow, ow! go de houn' outside.

Scratch, scratch! scuffle, scuffle! Ah oo-oo-oo! wow, ow, ow! Scratch, scratch! scuffle, scuffle! Ah oo-oo-oo! wow, ow, ow!

An' so dey keep hit up, twell ole Miss Rabbit des ez mad at one ez turr.

"Wot *is* yo' doin', Mistah Rabbit?" she say agin an' 'gin; but Ole Chuff ain' satify 'er bout dat.

Treckly, dough, wen he git thu an' blow out de cannel an' de day gunter broke, she bin nodiss dat he step sorter lop-side.

"Wat is de mattah, Mistah Rabbit?" she ax. "Is yo' run er brier inter yo' foot?"

"No," sez 'e, mighty shawt, "I ain' got no brier in my foot dat I knows un, but I gotter brier in my mine 'bout de size ob er snipe-bill, ef I ain' mistookened."

At dat she let fly er swam[1] o' queschins, but he des grin dry an' say, —

"Ax me no queschins an' I tell yo' no lies. Doan' bodder me, ole ooman (old woman, wife). I ain' feel berry strong in de haid dis mawnin', an' I mought hatter anser queschins wid my fist ef I gits pestered."

Dat shet 'er up, in cose, an' she sot in ter gittin' brekfus. Putty soon she holler out, —

"Who bin techin' de braid? Somebody bin a-cuttin' de braid! I lay I gotter trounce dem greedy chilluns foh dat. Pear lak I kyarn' set down nuttin' dese days but dey gotter muss in hit! I gwine ter cut me er big hick'ry lim' dis mawnin' an' see ef I kyarn' lick some mannuz inter de whole kit an' bilin' un um! In de meanwiles o' gittin' dat lim' I gwine ter smack de jaws ob de whole crowd."

"No yo' ain'," sez Ole Rabbit, sez 'e. "Des lef dem young uns o' mine 'lone. Dey ain' done nuttin. *I* cut dat braid, an' I got dat braid, an' I ain' gwine ter gin 'er up."

Putty soon ole Miss Rabbit sing out ergin.

"Who bin cuttin' de bakin (bacon) fat?" sez she; "an' cuttin' hit crookid too," sez she. "I lay I des leaf de brekfus an' set out 'n' git dat lim' right now," sez she.

"No, yo' woan'," sez Ole Rabbit, sez 'e. "I ain' gwine ter hab de sense w'ale outen dem young uns o' mine. *I* tuck dat fat an' I got dat fat, an' ef I haggle de slice dat my look out," sez 'e. "I paid

[1] Swarm.

foh hit, an' I gwine ter cut hit wid de saw ur de scissuz, ef I feel lak hit," sez 'e.

Wid dat he git up an' walk off, lim-petty-limp.

Miss Rabbit ain' see no mo' un im twell sundown. Den he come in lookin' mighty tuckahd out, but des a-grinnin' lak er bake skunk. He sot down he did, an' et lak he bin holler clar to he toes, but he woan' say nuttin. Wen he git thu he sorter stretch hissef an' say, —

"I gwine ter go ter baid. I gotter heap o' sleep ter mek up, an' I lay no dawg ain' gwine ter 'sturb my res' dis night."

An' dey doan'. Dey wuzzen' er soun', an' Miss Rabbit mek er gret miration at dat in huh min', but she ain' got nobody ter tork hit unter twell de nex' mawnin', wen Ole Rabbit git up ez gay an' sassy ez er yeahlin'. Den 'e hab de big tale ter tell, an' dis wuz wut he tell 'er: —

Wen he wuz a-foolin' in de cubberd he git 'im er piece o' braid, an' he tie dat on he foot. Den he cut 'im er slice o' bakin', an' he putt dat on top de braid. Den he slip on he shoe an' he staht out. Dat he do kase he gwine ter fix 'im some shoe-braid foh feed ter dat dawg, kase ef yo' wah braid in yo' shoe an' den gin hit unter er dawg, an' he eat hit, dat dawg yo'n. He gwine ter foller yo' ter de eens o' de yeath, dat he am. De bakin he put on ter gin dat braid er good tase, an' ter fool de folks wut see 'im, kase he gwineter let on lak he run er brier in he foot an' tuck 'n' putt on dat bakin foh ter dror out de so'ness an' kip 'im fum a-gettin' de lock-jaw.

Well, he tromp roun' twell de wite man go ter de fiel', an' den he sorter slip up easy-like, an' he fling dat shoe-braid afront o' dat ole houn' dawg. Hit gulf hit down in des one swaller. Yo' know dem houn' dawgs des alluz bin hongry sence de minnit dey wuz bawn, an' yo' kyarn' fill um up no mo' 'n ef dey got holes in um de same ez er cullendah.

De minnit dat shoe-braid bin swaller, dat ole houn'-dawg des natchelly hone[1] atter Ole Rabbit. He tuck out atter 'im thu' de bresh so swif' dat hit sorter skeer Ole Chuffy. He was des a-studyin' 'bout a-leadin' dat houn' ter de crik, an' a-tyin' a rock roun' he neck an' a-drowndin' um, but dis hyeah turrible hurry 'sprize 'im so dat he des run lak de Ole Boy wuz a-tryin' ter ketch 'im. Hyeah dey had hit! Up hill an' down holler, crost de fiel' an' roun' de stump, obah an' undah, roun' an' roun', ketch ef yo' kin an' foller ef yo' kyarn'. O suz, dat wuz er race!

No tellin' how hit mought er come out ef Ole Rab hedn' run crost an Injun man wid er bow an' arrer.

De Injun gun ter fit de arrer ter de string foh ter shoot dat Chuffy

[1] *To hone* is to yearn.

Rabbit, wen he holler out loud ez he c'd holler foh de shawtness ob he bref, —

"Oh! hole on, Mistah Injun Man, hole on er minnit. I 'm a-fetchin' yo' er present," sez 'e, "er mighty nice present," sez 'e.

"Wut yo' fetch?" sez de Injun Man, kine o' spishis-lak.

"Hit 's er dawg," sez Ole Rabbit, a-wuhkin he yeahs an' a-flinchin' he nose, kase he hyeah dat dawg a-cracklin' thu' de bresh, "a mighty nice fat dawg, Mistah Injun Man. I hyeah tell dat yo' ole ooman wuz po'ly, an' I wuz a-brungin' dis hyeah houn'-dawg sost yo' c'd mek er stchew outen um," sez 'e. "I 'd a-fotch um ready cook," sez 'e, "but my ole ooman des nowurz 'long o' yo'n in de mekin' o' stchews," sez 'e. "I wuz foh fetchin' er string o' inguns foh seas'nin an' den I doan' know ef yo' lak um wid inguns," sez 'e.

De Injun suttinly wuz tickle wid dat lallygag, but he doan' say much. He des sorter grunt an' look todes de bresh.

"Dat um! dat my houn'-dawg a-comin'!" say Ole Rabbit a-flinchin' mo' an' mo' ez de cracklin' come a-nighah. "Yo' bettah shoot um, des ez 'e bonce outen de bresh, kase dat er mon'sus shy dawg, mon'sus shy! He woan' foller nobody but me, an' I kyarn' go 'long home wid yo' an' tek um, kase Ise lame. Las' night I c'd'n sleep my lef' han' hine foot huht so, an' now I got um tie up in bakin fat. Shoot um right hyeah, Mistah Injun! Dat de bes' an' de safes', mon!"

Des dat minnit out jump de dawg, an' — zim! — Mistah Injun des shoot um an' pin um to de groun'.

Den Ole Man Rabbit mop de sweat offen he face an' lope off home, leas' dat de tale he tell de fambly, an' ef tain' true nobody ain' a-'nyin' hit dese days, an' ez he say ter he ole ooman, hit er good laughin' tale ter day, but twuz mon'sus solemncholly yistiddy.

Sence dat time all de houn'-dawgs is sholy cunjer, kase ef dey kech er gimpse ob er rabbit tail out dey putt atter hit.

Mary A. Owen.